

Proposed Changes to Recreational Bottom-Fishing Regulations for 2004

by DFG Staff

Changes in California's ocean sport fishing regulations for federally-designated groundfish (rockfish, lingcod, cabezon, kelp greenling, and California scorpionfish), and associated state-managed species (rock greenling, ocean whitefish and California sheephead) have been proposed by DFG for consideration by the Fish and Game Commission for the 2004 calendar year. These regulatory changes are needed to help

achieve groundfish management goals, including the rebuilding of "overfished" stocks of rockfish and lingcod, and will help achieve consistency between state regulations and federal groundfish rules for the 2004 calendar year. The federal Pacific Fishery Management Council adopted changes to groundfish rules on Sept. 12. The Commission is expected to take final action at its Dec. 3-5 meeting in Sacramento.

The proposed changes would expand the fishing season (open period) for most species, from six to ten months in the area south of 40°10' N. latitude (near Cape Mendocino). The proposed changes would also expand fishing areas in the central and southern management areas. The tables below summarize proposed and existing regulations for 2004; all proposed changes are subject to the Commission's approval. 🐟

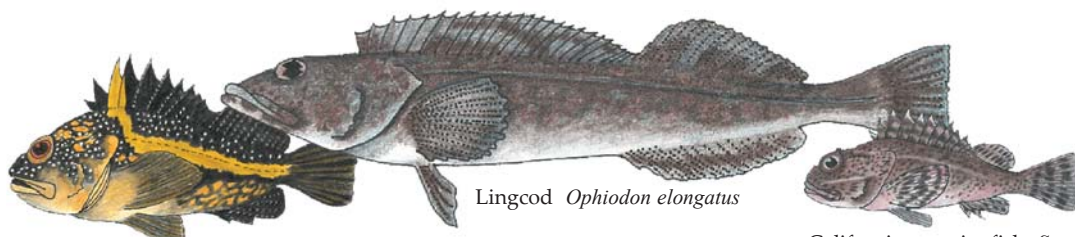
Proposed Recreational Bottom-Fishing Regulations* for 2004

Northern Management Area				
Ocean waters between the California-Oregon Border and 40°10' N. latitude (near Cape Mendocino)				
Species	Time Period	Depth Limit	Daily Bag Limit	Size Limit ¹
Rockfish (except canary, cowcod, yelloweye and bocaccio rockfishes)	Open all year	no depth restrictions	10 fish in combination; see sub-limits for bocaccio, canary, and yelloweye rockfishes	see individual species below
Canary and Yelloweye Rockfishes	CLOSED all year; NO RETENTION		NO RETENTION (zero)	
Bocaccio	Open all year	no depth restrictions	2 per person; also included in the 10-fish aggregate rockfish bag limit.	10" total length or greater
Cabezon	Open all year	no depth restrictions	10 per person	15" total length or greater
Kelp and Rock Greenlings	Open all year	no depth restrictions	10 kelp greenling per person; 10 rock greenling per person	12" total length or greater
Lingcod	Open all year	no depth restrictions	2 per person	24" total length or greater

* Subject to Fish and Game Commission approval

1 See regulations for information on gear restrictions and fillet lengths

"Proposed Regulations" continued on page 10



China rockfish *Sebastes nebulosus*

Lingcod *Ophiodon elongatus*

California scorpionfish, *Scorpaena guttata*

Fish sketches by

Miller and Lea, 2000; Sinclair 2000

Proposed Recreational Bottom-Fishing Regulations* for 2004-Continued

Central Management Area

Ocean waters between 40°10' N. latitude (near Cape Mendocino) and 34°27' N. latitude (Point Conception)

Species	Time Period ¹	Depth Limit	Daily Bag Limit	Size Limit ²
RCG Complex (including all species of Rockfish, Cabezon and Greenlings as defined in Section 1.91, Title 14)	<u>Open</u> Jan, Feb, and May-Dec <u>Closed</u> Mar-April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jan, Feb, and Sep-Dec may only be taken in less than 180 feet (30 fathoms)³; May-Aug may only be taken in less than 120 feet (20 fathoms)³ 	10 fish in combination; see sub-limits for shallow nearshore rockfish, cabezon, greenlings, and bocaccio, cowcod, canary and yelloweye rockfishes	see individual species and groups below
Shallow Nearshore Rockfish (as defined in Section 1.90, Title 14; includes Black-and-yellow, China, Grass, Gopher and Kelp Rockfishes)	<u>Open</u> Jan, Feb, and May-Dec <u>Closed</u> Mar-April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jan, Feb, and Sep-Dec may only be taken in less than 180 feet (30 fathoms)³; May-Aug may only be taken in less than 120 feet (20 fathoms)³ 	2 fish in combination; also included in the 10-fish aggregate RCG complex bag limit	
Cabezon	<u>Open</u> Jan, Feb, and May-Dec; <u>Closed</u> Mar-April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jan, Feb, and Sep-Dec may only be taken in less than 180 feet (30 fathoms)³; May-Aug may only be taken in less than 120 feet (20 fathoms)³ 	3 fish; also included in the 10-fish aggregate RCG complex bag limit	15" total length or greater
Kelp and Rock Greenlings	<u>Open</u> Jan, Feb, and May-Dec; <u>Closed</u> Mar-April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jan, Feb, and Sep-Dec may only be taken in less than 180 feet (30 fathoms)³; May-Aug may only be taken in less than 120 feet (20 fathoms)³ 	2 fish in combination; also included in the 10-fish aggregate RCG complex bag limit	12" total length or greater
Canary, Cowcod, and Yelloweye Rockfishes	CLOSED all year; NO RETENTION		NO RETENTION (zero)	
Bocaccio	<u>Open</u> Jan, Feb, and May-Dec; <u>Closed</u> Mar-April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jan, Feb, and Sep-Dec may only be taken in less than 180 feet (30 fathoms)³; May-Aug may only be taken in less than 120 feet (20 fathoms)³ 	1 fish; also included in the 10-fish aggregate RCG complex bag limit	10" total length or greater
Lingcod	<u>Open</u> Jan, Feb, and May-Dec; <u>Closed</u> Mar-April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jan, Feb, and Sep-Dec may only be taken in less than 180 feet (30 fathoms)³; May-Aug may only be taken in less than 120 feet (20 fathoms)³ 	2 per person	24" total length or greater
California Scorpionfish	<u>Open</u> Jan, Feb, and May-Dec; <u>Closed</u> Mar-April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jan, Feb, and Sep-Dec may only be taken in less than 180 feet (30 fathoms)³; May-Aug may only be taken in less than 120 feet (20 fathoms)³ 	5 per person	10" total length or greater
Ocean Whitefish	Same as the rockfish and lingcod seasons ⁴	Same as the rockfish and lingcod seasons ⁴	10 per person	
California Sheephead	Same as the rockfish and lingcod seasons ⁴	Same as the rockfish and lingcod seasons ⁴	5 per person	12" total length or greater

*Subject to Fish and Game Commission approval

1 Fish and Game Commission is considering a proposed exemption to closed periods for shore-based divers and anglers

2 See regulations for information on gear restrictions and fillet lengths

3 In the Cowcod Conservation Areas fishing is prohibited in waters greater than 120 ft (20 fathoms)

4 The Fish and Game Commission is considering three other options: open all year and may only be taken in less than 120 ft (20 fathoms)³; open all year and may only be taken in less than 360 ft (60 fathoms)³; open all year and no depth restrictions³

Proposed Recreational Bottom-Fishing Regulations* for 2004-Continued

Southern Management Area				
Ocean waters between 34°27' N. latitude (Point Conception) and the U.S.-Mexican Border				
Species	Time Period ¹	Depth Limit	Daily Bag Limit	Size Limit ²
RCG Complex (including all species of Rockfish, Cabezon and Greenlings as defined in Section 1.91, Title 14)	<u>Open</u> Mar-Dec; <u>Closed</u> Jan-Feb	may only be taken in less than 360 feet (60 fathoms) ³	10 fish in combination; see sub-limits for shallow nearshore rockfish, cabezon, greenlings, and bocaccio, cowcod, canary and yelloweye rockfishes	See individual species and groups below
Shallow Nearshore Rockfish (as defined in Section 1.90, Title 14; includes Black-and-yellow, China, Grass, Gopher and Kelp Rockfishes)	<u>Open</u> Mar-Dec; <u>Closed</u> Jan-Feb	may only be taken in less than 360 feet (60 fathoms) ³	2 fish in combination; also included in the 10-fish aggregate RCG complex bag limit	
Cabezon	<u>Open</u> Mar-Dec; <u>Closed</u> Jan-Feb	may only be taken in less than 360 feet (60 fathoms) ³	3 fish; also included in the 10-fish aggregate RCG complex bag limit	15" total length or greater
Kelp and Rock Greenlings	<u>Open</u> Mar-Dec; <u>Closed</u> Jan-Feb	may only be taken in less than 360 feet (60 fathoms) ³	2 fish in combination; also included in the 10-fish aggregate RCG complex bag limit	12" total length or greater
Canary, Cowcod, and Yelloweye Rockfishes	CLOSED all year; NO RETENTION		NO RETENTION (zero)	
Bocaccio	<u>Open</u> Mar-Dec; <u>Closed</u> Jan-Feb	may only be taken in less than 360 feet (60 fathoms) ³	1 fish; also included in the 10-fish aggregate RCG complex bag limit	10" total length or greater
Lingcod	<u>Open</u> Mar-Dec; <u>Closed</u> Jan-Feb	may only be taken in less than 360 feet (60 fathoms) ³	2 per person	24" total length or greater
California Scorpionfish	<u>Open</u> Mar, April, Nov, and Dec; <u>Closed</u> Jan, Feb, and May-Oct	may only be taken in less than 360 feet (60 fathoms) ³	5 per person	10" total length or greater
Ocean Whitefish	Same as the rockfish and lingcod seasons ³	Same as the rockfish and lingcod fishing depths ³	10 per person	
California Sheephead	Same as the rockfish and lingcod seasons ³	Same as the rockfish and lingcod fishing depths ³	5 per person	12" total length or greater

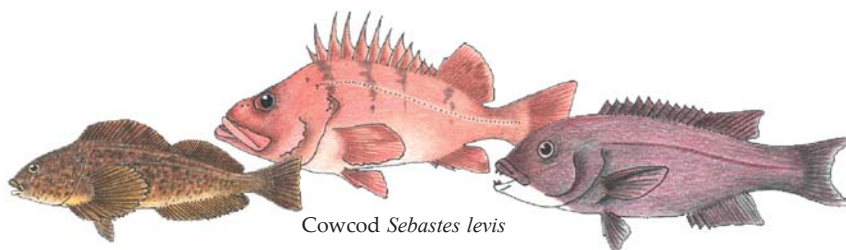
***Subject to Fish and Game Commission approval**

1 Fish and Game Commission is considering a proposed exemption to closed periods for shore-based divers and anglers

2 See regulations for information on gear restrictions and fillet lengths

3 The Fish and Game Commission is considering three other options: open all year and may only be taken in less than 120 feet (20 fathoms)⁴; open all year and may only be taken in less than 360 feet (60 fathoms)⁴; open all year and no depth restrictions⁴

4 In the Cowcod Conservation Areas fishing is prohibited in waters greater than 120 feet (20 fathoms)



Kelp greenling *Hexagrammos decagrammus*
(female)

Cowcod *Sebastes levis*

California sheephead, *Semicossyphus pulcher*
(female)

Fish sketches by
Miller and Lea, 2000; Sinclair 2000